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Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer

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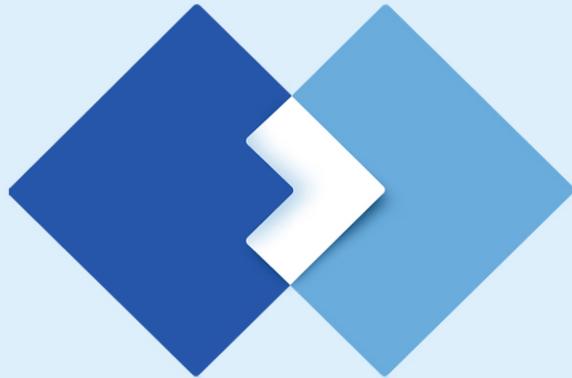
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A Comparative Study of Business Students Success Factors: A Pathways Initiative at Algoma University's Brampton Campus.

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The Background to this Initiative

- Algoma University Extension Business Administration Diploma to Degree program @ Brampton initiative began in the Fall of 2010.
- The research for this program began in the Fall of 2008; involved a comparative analysis of some 15 college business curricula, and gap analysis between the colleges' programming and Algoma University's Bachelor of Business Administration (AU-BBA) program.

The Background to this Initiative

The 2008 preliminary findings:

1. Bridging or transition courses could provide a near seamless transition from college business programs to the AU-BBA.
2. Existing college programming differences require each bridge to be independent, but if program similarities could increased then transition could be accommodated with one bridge with a few different pathways.
3. Pathways would allow colleges to focus on their missions, but also provide opportunity for their students to get a university degree in a lesser amount of time than normal

Defining Success

AU-BBA defines success in terms of student performance through some key indicators:

- Student term-by-term grade point progression through the program after taking and passing both ADMN 1206 and ADMN 1207
- Student retention rates by term after ADMN 1206 and 1207
- Student graduation rates after ADMN 1206 and 1207 (there are data limitations for this metric)
- Student performance in the two BBA capstone courses – ADMN 4606 (Policy and Strategic Planning I) and 4607 (Policy and Strategic Planning II)

The Program Design Stage : Preliminary Research Findings

- As the collaborative programming research progressed, the following became obvious:
 - 1) Appropriate business programme design and small modifications to college business programming eliminated the need for a transition term between college and university business programs – the exception being Accounting. But this may change as a result of the accounting designation merger.
 - 2) A four term college business diploma and four term non-major AU-BBA university degree is possible.
 - 3) Six term college business specialization programme linked to a four term AU –BBA programme with a Minor is possible in high affinity programs.
 - 4) A block credit transfer system, varying from partner to partner should replace the previous course and articulation arrangements between colleges and universities.
 - 5) To increase the likelihood of success, only college students with a minimum grade of B or a 70% average should be granted the Block credit transfer

The Program Design Stage

- In order to make this happen the AU-BBA programme had some internal concerns and issues to deal with:
 1. How to make this a cost effective delivery model and system
 2. How to synchronize the offsite extension programming with that of the main campus to ensure course and program quality
 3. Can one solution that successfully addresses both the 101 and the 105 gap analysis issues be developed?

The Start-Up stage

The solutions to the three issues were:

1. To hire a fulltime faculty member at the Brampton campus to help manage the new initiative.
2. To address quality control and course consistency, the typical multi-section course management approach was adopted:
 - Each course assigned to an experienced course supervisor, whose role is to ensure that there are as few issues with their assigned course as possible.
3. To redesign and further develop two courses, ADMN 1206 (an introductory qualitative research course) and ADMN 1207 (a quantitative research course):
 - Both are mandatory 3-credit courses for all students entering the AU-BBA regardless of prior learning. We believe that these courses have successfully bridged identified gaps for 105s

The Start-Up stage

- To facilitate speed of graduation, the Brampton - BBA is delivered using a trimester system
- An in-classroom course delivery system is used, though there are some on-line courses available
- Class size in the first two intakes are small (<40 students); intake occurs in both September and January
- New part-time instructors are brought to the main campus for orientation sessions
- The Brampton campus full-time faculty member acts as mentor and guide to all part-time faculty and students
- There are now approximately 140 FTE on the Brampton campus

The Data Analysis

This research project examines the preliminary outcomes of the Business Diploma to Business Degree pathway designed by Pelham Matthews of Algoma University, as part of a CUCC (now ONCAT) pathway design project lead by Maureen Callaghan and Richard Hook

The Data Analysis

Data was collected from Algoma University's student records system for each student who has successfully completed at least one semester of studies at Brampton campus. This data included:

- Entry pathway (college, GPA, transfer credits)
- Current average (overall and per term)
- Grade in ADMN 1206 & ADMN 1207 – considered bridging courses
- Grade in ADMN 4606 – considered capstone course

Three groups were identified for 1206 and 1207: (1) those who received the bridge course as transfer credit; (2) those who had completed the bridge course at Algoma U – Brampton; and (3) those who had not yet completed the bridge course at Algoma U – Brampton

The Data Analysis

Success in ADMN 1206/1207 was compared to Entry GPA, Grade in ADMN 4606 and Current Overall Average.

- The data met all requirements for conducting an ANOVA (i.e., homogeneity of variance; normality)
- There was no significant difference in entry GPA and Current/Graduating GPA between the three groups of students cited earlier
- When analyzing ADMN 4606 there were significant differences between the three groups; thus, post-hoc testing was applied to further compare each group separately.

Post-hoc test was performed(LSD).

- The average grade in ADMN 4606 for those who took ADMN 1206 was 4.0% higher than those who received ADMN 1206 as transfer credit. This was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.
- Revealing that the average grade in ADMN 4606 for those who took ADMN 1207 was 4.7% higher than those who received ADMN 1206 as a transfer credit. This was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Next Research steps

Over the next few years this analysis will be repeated as a larger sample size will increase the data's reliability and validity.

Also further data aggregations from different admissions pathways would add value:

- For example:
 - 2 year versus 3 year College Diplomas
 - Colleges of Origin
 - Total amount of Transfer Credits Received
 - Business Diploma vs. Non-Business Diploma

Why Pursue additional Pathway Partnerships

Win for students:

- Do not have to leave home to study
- Can stay on the same college campus
- Lower costs (tuition and travel)
- Exposure to small classes, and a small university campus environment and experience within a larger college campus
- Opportunity for inter-campus exchange

Win for AlgomaU:

- Expanded student base without having to invest in more infrastructure
- Increased tuition revenue
- Increased brand exposure

Win for the MTCU:

- Decreased need to fund university capital projects
- Can make more efficient use of existing college capital investments
- Greater access in a more effective way for Ontario students to earn both a diploma and a degree
- Decreased PSE system subsidization costs

The Brampton model demonstrates success for students and for the institution